Cash crops to be grown in the country

2595. SHRI K. V. THANGKABALU: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether any assessment has been made of the cash crops that will be produced in the country because of good rain;

(b) if so, the State-wise break-up; and

(c) whether advance planning has been made for their proper storage and if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE AND COOPERATION IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SHYAM LAL YADAV): (a) and (b) Rainfall and weather conditions during the current year i.e. 1988-89 have generally been favourable in almost all the States. It is too early to give any precise idea about the level of production of cash crops in the country. However, according to present indications, if weather remains favourable in remaining parts of the year, the targetted levels of different cash crops are likely to be achieved.

(c) The designated public sector agencies have been fully geared to mop up all quantities offered at minimum/support prices for proper storage and release at appropriate time.

Subsidies on chemical fertilizers

2596. SHRI K. V. THANGKABALU: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether subsidies on chemical fertilizers are a serious strain on the economy;

(b) whether chemical fertilizers are mainly used by effluent farmers;

(c) whether bio-organic farming is gaining widespread use as a part of sustainable agriculture; and

(d) if so, the details of the steps taken to introduce their use in a big way to reduce the use of chemical fertilizers?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE AND COOPERATION IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SHYAM LAL YADAV): (a) The sale price of chemical Fertilizers is subsidised by the Government.

(b) No, Sir.

(c) and (d) Government have already taken up programme of production and promotion of use of Bio-fertilizers such as Rhizobium and Blue Green Algae culture under the National Project on Development and Use of Bio-fertilizers. These will supplement the use of chemical fertilizers on leguminous crops and wet-land rice.

Substandard ship purchased by the ICAR

2597. SHRI K. V. THANGKABALU: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the ship purchased by the Indian Council of Agricultural Research for research purpose has proved to be substandard; and

(b) if so, the details of the expenditure incurred so far on its maintenance and repair?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE, RESEARCH AND EDUCATION IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI HARI KRISHNA SHASTRI): (a) The performance of the Research Vessel (R.V.) Skipjack at Central Marine Fisheries Research Institute (ICAR), Cochin, is substandard.

(b) An expenditure of Rs. 66,48,408.37 has been incurred on maintenance and repairs of this ship till 15th November, 1988.

Short term loan to Andhra Pradesh

2598. SHRI GOPALA RAO, RAO: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state: